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REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-21 remain pending, claims 1, 10, 18, and 19 being independent.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 1-17 are allowed. Although independent claims 1 and 10 have been amended so that the phrase "vehicular widthwise outer face" now reads --vehicular widthwise face--, Applicant submits that this amendment should not affect the allowability of these claims.

For at least the reasons set forth below, Applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims should be indicated as allowable.

Claim Objections

In response to the claim objections set forth on page 2 of the Office Action, Applicant has made the claim amendments suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the claim objections be withdrawn.

Prior Art Rejections

Claim 18 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as allegedly being anticipated by *Ikemizu* (U.S. Patent 4,388,355) and further as allegedly being anticipated by *Tyves* (U.S. Patent 5,186,509). Claims 18, 19, and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as

allegedly being unpatentable over *Ikemizu* in view of *Deb et al.* (U.S. Patent 6,145,908). Furthermore, claims 18-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over *Tyves* in view of *Deb et al.* These rejections, insofar as they pertain to the presently-pending claims, are respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 18, as amended, is directed to a pillar trim structure, comprising: first and second retained members each having its one end fixed on a pillar trim and its other end retained in a corresponding hole formed in a pillar, such that the first and second retained members engage, respectively, with first and second holes formed in the pillar, wherein engagements between the first and second retained members and the pillar are released by deforming the pillar trim to change the angle of the first and second retained members with respect to the pillar.

Thus, claim 18, as amended, specifies that the first and second holes are formed in the pillar and they correspond to the first and second retained members of the pillar trim for engaging the first and second retained members.

Independent claim 19, as amended, is directed to a pillar trim, comprising: a cover member for covering a vehicular pillar from an inner side of a vehicular compartment, the cover member being made of a flexible material; a first retaining member extending from the cover member and having an end portion thereof provided with a first surface that engages with a first hole formed

in the vehicular pillar when the cover member is not deformed; a second retaining member extending from the cover member and having an end portion thereof provided with a second surface that engages with a second hole formed in the vehicular pillar when the cover member is not deformed, wherein the first surface and the second surface disengage from vehicular pillar by deforming the cover member.

Thus, claim 19, as amended, specifies that the first hole and the second hole are formed in the vehicular pillar and each hole corresponds to a retaining member of the pillar trim - i.e., the first hole corresponds to the first retaining member and the second hole corresponds to the second retaining member for engaging such retained members.

In rejecting independent claims 18 and 19, the Examiner relies on the trim/molding arrangements described in *Ikemizu*, *Tyves*, and *Deb*. However, neither *Ikemizu* nor *Tyves* discloses a structure as claimed in independent claims 18 and 19, in which the pillar has the first and second holes formed and corresponding to and engaging with first and second retained members in the manner claimed. *Deb* only discloses a trim structure for attaching to a pillar from inside of a vehicular compartment, and likewise fails to disclose the arrangement set forth in claims 18 and 19.

Accordingly, none of the cited prior art references, either alone or in combination, discloses or even suggests the arrangement as recited in claim 18 or 19.

Claims 20 and 21, dependent on claim 19, are allowable at least for their dependency upon claim 19.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's prior art rejections.

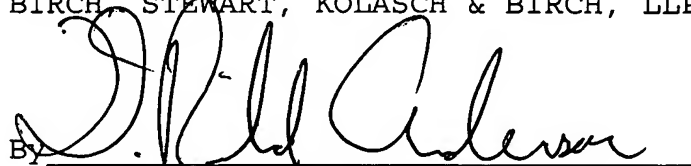
Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Richard Anderson", is written over a horizontal line.

D. Richard Anderson, #40,439

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Attachment(s): Revised Abstract of the Disclosure